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ABSTRACT

A "mini-manual" for individuals in education and the human services interested in increasing their involvement in the political process presupposes that much powerlessness is self-imposed, and encourages attitude change to make the most of potential individual power. The manual is also an introduction to lobbying and the legislative process. After an introduction to building political "credit" with policy-makers, the second chapter discusses the need for the individual to have a political state of mind and acceptance of the legitimacy of political activity. Subsequent chapters discuss (1) accumulating political capital with votes, volunteers, dollars, publicity, and access to voters, and the persuasiveness of numbers when dealing with policy policy-makers; (2) politicians' views of educators and the avoidance of such stereotypes; (3) personalizing political contacts; (4) lobbying from a distance; (5) the usefulness of professional association efforts; and (6) formal legislative hearings. Finally, a list of print references concerning the Washington, D.C., political scene and congressional politics is provided, and 20 brief rules for action are outlined. (MSE)

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A Guide for the Powerless~ and those Who Don't Know their Own Power.

SAMUEL HALPERIN

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Samuel Halperin has combined careers in academia, the federal government, and educational administration to become a respected commentator on the politics of education in the United States.

After earning his Ph.D. in political science, he taught in several universities and joined the professional staffs of the U.S. Congress' committees on education in 1960-61. His later work as Assistant U.S. Commissioner of Education for Legislation and Congressional Relations (1965-66) and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health, Education and Welfare (1966-69) won two Superior Service awards and the Distinguished Service Award.

Since 1969, Halperin has been director of a variety of professional development programs for American educational policymakers conducted under the auspices of the Institute for Educational Leadership, of which he was director (1974-81) and first president (1980-81).

Dr. Halperin has been a guest lecturer at leading universities around the country and has published over 70 articles and reviews in professional, educational, and political journals, books, encyclopedia and compendia. He currently serves on the U.S. Peace Corps Advisory Council and the Secretary of the Navy's Advisory Board on Education and Training.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To mention here the great teachers and worthy colleagues who have instructed me over the years would inevitably seem to some a vain display of name-dropping. I hope I have, instead, directly acknowledged my debts, both personal and professional, to each, and that in this modest contribution they will find something of their own substance and high ideals.

Christopher T. Cross, John F. Jennings, Greg Humphrey and Jerold Roschwalb, four of Washington's finest practitioners of the political process, critiqued an early draft of the manuscript. They are absolved of all responsibility for remaining errors or misplaced emphasis, but they cannot escape my fervent hope that there will be many good issues in the future on which they will stand united. When they do, the earth will shake and the heavens tremble. . . .

Nancy M. Pinson, co-directing a project funded by the National Institute of Education, first challenged me to commit some of my experience and convictions to paper. And Dietra Hallums, my incomparable friend and confidante across two decades, made sure that I did so.

Finally, the Rockefeller Foundation, through the spirit of its Villa Serbelloni and gracious staff, gave me respite from my administrative duties in Washington to complete this manuscript while a scholar in residence at their Bellagio, Italy, Study Center. The Foundation also made it possible to distribute this publication gratis to nonprofit organizations and educational policymakers.

INTRODUCTION

"Things don't just happen. They are made to happen."
—John F. Kennedy

"The basic requirement for the understanding of the politics of change is to recognize the world as it is. We must work with it on its terms if we are to change to the kind of world we would like it to be."

—Saul Alinsky

"Knowledge will forever govern ignorance and a people that mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power that knowledge brings."

—James Madison

This mini-manual is about *power*—or, perhaps more precisely, about the personal reclamation of power and the purging of feelings of powerlessness, currently so widespread a malady of contemporary American society.

Powerlessness is widely considered an unfortunate human condition. Indeed, most of us have experienced its pain and deliberately seek to avoid its disabilities. Yet, powe*rful*ness is a much maligned concept among much of our population. For an individual to be personally powerful is often popularly equated with being less than a fully moral or a good human being.

When I use the concept of power, I refer to its Latin root—*potere*, "to be able to." *Able* to understand and *able* to operate in the political process with a fair degree of skill. *Able* to use our political institutions for no less than the protection of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

I am a traditionalist. I believe that widespread participation in the political process is essential for the fulfillment of both self and society. While there are theoretical dangers in urging "everyone" to participate in the process—especially since I do not know what ends others will seek with their mastery of the system—I accept the risks. For the fact is that today—here and now—millions of my

fellow citizens are needlessly exposed to hazard because they have neither the inclination nor the knowledge to advance their own interests and to protect themselves from the political decisions brought about by powerful others. So I encourage *informed and effective* participation in politics.

Another assumption underlies this mini-manual. I assert that the American political system is *open to participation and to reshaping* to an amazing extent; that persons can enter it and, in America's long pragmatic tradition, make a positive difference in their own lives and in the society around them. While, admittedly, some people are "more equal than others" in their wielding of power, the greatest disparities are attributable to ignorance of the political process and to the reluctance to get involved with it. Thus, *powerlessness is mostly self-imposed.*

By the same token, powerlessness can be overcome through effort. Stated differently, the institutions of power are a lot like a coral sponge. Seen from the outside they appear infinitely variegated, complicated, impossible to truly penetrate. But on closer inspection, most people have found our political institutions surprisingly permeable, quick to soak up new ideas and to incorporate new participants. In such a setting, the world isn't divided neatly into two classes of people, "the powerful" and "the powerless." Rather, people (particularly in organized association with others) have a large amount of unmobilized, unrealized or *potential* power. How interesting it is to note that the same Latin root for "power"—*potere*—is also the root for the word "potential"!

Attitudinal change—which is what this mini-manual is mostly about—leads quite easily to the acquisition of insight and political skills. As one rejects powerlessness and tries out one's "political wings," success brings new confidence. Mastery of new skills brings a sense of elation. Appetite comes with eating. Just so, the transformation of personal power comes with the exercise of some quite simple and accessible political processes and leads to ultimate *self-determination* in the world around us. And that is why I subtitle this mini-manual—*And Those Who Don't Know Their Own Power!*

This mini-manual was written for initial use by professional educators and other workers in the human services. It should have utility as well for anyone who is contemplating trading in his/her powerlessness for a new sense of personal potency. My hope is that the manual's insights and counsel might prove applicable at various levels of government—federal, state and local—and to encounters

with a variety of policymakers—Congressmen, state legislators, key agency executives. In this circumstance, no single terminology is possible; words like legislator, lawmaker, Member, policymaker, politician and key executive officeholder are used as if they were always interchangeable—when, of course they are not. Yet, I trust the similarities and utility in political practice far exceed the differences and consequent awkwardness in this writing.

In offering practical counsel on how to go about realizing one's objectives in the political process, I have adopted a degree of generalization that may trouble some readers. To Albert Einstein, "Abandonment of generalization. . . means to relinquish understanding altogether." But, in the words of one of history's greatest aphorists, Oliver Wendell Holmes: "The chief end of man is to frame general propositions, and no general proposition is worth a damn."

So much for the utility of aphorisms! Yet, generalization about American democratic politics is necessary if the reader is to be spared a heavy treatise on the many "special cases" inherent in our messy intergovernmental system of political decisionmaking.

Obviously, too, this mini-manual cannot be more than an introduction to lobbying and the legislative process. Once over the threshold of these initial forms of participation, other forms of political involvement will become far more accessible, manageable and, yes, enjoyable.

ON CREDIT IN THE BANK

"Too late to dig well when house on fire."
—ancient Chinese proverb

"The time to make friends is before you need them."
—Lyndon B. Johnson

In ten words, L.B.J., one of America's consummate politicians and legislative masters, summed up a world of practical wisdom. Senator, majority leader, later President, Johnson recognized that, at some point, all of us are going to want something from others. Perhaps the best way to assure that we will get it is to have prepared the groundwork long in advance.

Politicians often speak of building up "credit" with those who have received their favors or services. They feel duty-bound—tantamount to a professional code of honor—to give and to receive "chips" or "I.O.U.s" from those they have aided and to those who have aided them. This is not to say that *every* deed is done with the expectation that the receiving party "owes me one." It does signify that, particularly in a democratic, pluralistic society, *mutual assistance* is a deeply ingrained value. Politicians and policymakers expect to serve. In turn, they expect to be supported reciprocally in attaining their objectives.

If we accept that the best guarantor of future success in achieving our objectives is to plan ahead, to build friendships and "political credit" before they need to be redeemed or tested in situations of real need, we may then ask "what do *I* have to offer a politician?" The answer is amazingly simple: *anything* that is perceived by the officeholder as enhancing his or her performance on the job. This includes, for example, providing the information and political support necessary for effective policymaking; offering opportunities for winning favorable publicity, public recognition and self-esteem; the wide array of activities which contribute to the expectation of re-election and/or maintenance in appointive office.

Most of the time, by far, policymakers act as they do because

they believe that is the "right" or "best" public policy or because they are intellectually intrigued by the issue, not because they expect a narrow *quid pro quo*. On many an issue with low prospects for political payoff, policymakers act because they are playing to national (or even international) audiences and to assessments of what is likely to prove wise policy years out into the future. There is in the political process, in short, a great deal of personal intelligence and deep commitment to sound public service—as well as the more commonplace and visceral needs to "win" and to retain office. Besides, legislators like continuously to assure themselves that there is seldom a conflict between public and personal interest. Taking care of their reputations while pursuing what they conceive to be in the public interest— "being right on the issues"—will translate, directly or indirectly, they hope, into a popular decision for their retention in office.

So let us look more closely at some specific ways of building up political credit. For starters, most elected officeholders spend enormous amounts of energy trying to learn what their constituents "really want," even more, what's needed to "make things right in the world." Therefore, clear expressions of organizational, community, or individual interests, needs, and demands are inherently useful to policymakers. Even if they eventually act to the contrary, knowing who wants what and why is helpful data in mapping the political terrain and defining the degree of "wiggle room" or maneuverability available to the policymaker.

In a society in which fewer and fewer citizens bother to vote,* all politicians are impressed by the energy and determination of groups and individual citizens who are perceived capable of turning out the vote. Anyone—teacher, preacher, housewife or retiree—who demonstrates an ability to produce above-average voter turnout is almost immediately recognized and courted by the prevailing power structures. Sometimes, in this era of close elections, a person who can influence 20-50 voters is considered a veritable "powerhouse." (In Chicago, you even get to be precinct captain, the coveted first rung on the ladder of political advancement!)

* Only 34% of eligible Americans voted in the 1978 Congressional elections; 54% cast their ballots in the combined Presidential/Congressional elections of 1980. President Carter was elected by only 27.2% of the eligible voters; President Reagan by only 27.3%. Some other examples: Sen. John Tower (Texas) by 13% of the eligibles; Governor Brendan Byrne (New Jersey) by less than 15%; New York City Mayor Ed Koch by under 12%. ("Eligibles" refers to those adults who could register and vote if they choose to do so.)

How one goes about being perceived as capable of influencing blocs of votes is as varied as the personalities who comprise our polyglot society. Some do it by virtue of their formal leadership of clubs and organizations, family clans, churches, unions, veteran's and ethnic associations. Others earn that reputation by informal means: activity in a host of civic causes, vigorous personal involvement with friends, neighbors, colleagues. Still others by a display of "charismatic" or leadership qualities—courage, articulation, self-confidence, etc.

Whether formal or informal, politicians prize opportunities for public exposure through mention in organizational newsletters, invitations to speak, inclusion in social gatherings, large, and small. Increasingly, in a highly fractionated society, the person who arranges these opportunities for public figures is perceived as "an influential"—one who directly or indirectly creates the exposure which is, in turn, translated into votes.

Regardless of how it is done, almost all who enjoy the reputation of being "able to deliver" get there by *self-awareness* that their position is translatable into political currency or "clout," that they are acting very much within the American democratic tradition, and that, therefore, they have earned the right to prompt audience with policymakers. As they say in the lobbies of the legislatures, "You can get more with a kind word and a gun (political clout) than with a kind word alone."

FIRST: A STATE OF MIND

"Ideas are great arrows, but they must have a bow. Politics is the bow of idealism."

—Bill Moyers

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters."

—Frederick Douglass

This last point about self-awareness and self-acceptance requires special emphasis. For, while there are many individuals who are active in organizations and communities and who are appropriately considered "leaders," relatively few of these persons recognize that their activity can be translated into political gains. Too many persons of accomplishment and influence have been "depoliticized" in the sense that they fail to see the legitimate connection between their position and activity in society and the goals which they would like the political process to realize. Too often, like most Americans, they denigrate politicians and policymakers and see themselves as a world apart from the "nasty, noisy business" of politics—the process of deciding who gets what, when and how. No one—neither high school civics teacher, college political science instructor, priest or minister—has ever successfully driven home the point that politics is nothing more nor less than the process of distributing society's scarce resources.

As the ancient Greeks viewed it, politics embraces the civic obligations of running the affairs of the *polis*, or city state. All of us, after all, are governed, affected, shaped by the political process. The central questions, then, are: "Shall we, ourselves, act to shape our own destiny, to realize our own power—or shall we allow others to 'do it' to us?" "Will we confront the pain and consequences of our own sense of powerlessness and, in so doing, reclaim the power we have given away?"

The most successful "lobbyists" and political activists are generally those who have answered these questions affirmatively, with a sense that their actions are legitimate and, indeed, essential to the process of holding our governors accountable to what we, as citizens and taxpayers, feel is sound public policy. Only when we give psychological and practical affirmation to our own legitimacy does all that appears in this mini-manual make sense.

Following Oliver Wendell Holmes' dictum, "If you believe in great things, you may be able to make other people believe in them, too." The "nitty-gritty" of politics and lobbying may vary as greatly as the personalities, values and cultures of the players. But only with an underlying self-acceptance of the necessity and essential rightness of politics and lobbying will there be the necessary staying power to explore the many fascinating roads of the American political process.

MORE ON POLITICAL CAPITAL IN THE BANK: FROM SELF-AFFIRMATION TO EFFECTIVENESS

"Change is no longer threatening. It absorbs, enlarges, enriches. The unknown is friendly, interesting territory. Each insight widens the road, making the next state of travel, the next opening, easier."

—Marilyn Ferguson

O.K., so you truly accept the legitimacy of political activity. Now what? Voting power—the ability to influence the disposition of even small blocs of voters—may be the most obvious way to make friends before you need them. But for many, this kind of activity will simply not match one's temperament. "Not to worry!" Fortunately, there are numerous other ways to amass political credit. For example, candidates for office never have enough volunteer workers for the host of chores, often quite mundane, which are necessary to mount a comprehensive campaign. From stuffing literature in envelopes to manning telephone campaigns, from ringing doorbells in behalf of an officeseeker to driving voters to the polls, from writing press releases to hanging up campaign posters—there are never enough hands, certainly never sufficient paid workers, to do all that anxious candidates and their campaign managers want done. So those who volunteer and perform well will have automatic credit in their political bank. It follows that the individual or group producing multiple volunteers for a grateful candidate would garner even more of this credit.

Similarly, money, which has been described as the "mother's milk of politics," is almost always in short supply. Most office-seekers, feeling constantly under-financed, are impressed by even small campaign contributions. Better yet, if someone has the ability to gather $10 from each of 50 contributors or $100 each from five donors, the politician cannot fail to take notice. Since very few citizens contribute funds directly to candidates, the few who do stand out from the pack and are reasonably assured of a chance to plead their case. This initial access to the policymaker

may not, in itself, guarantee the desired policy outcome, but it does provide an invaluable head start for most persons, in most circumstances.

Beyond votes, volunteers, and dollars there are innumerable possibilities for building political capital in exchange for publicity and the access of officeholders or candidates to potential voters. Candidates will traverse great lengths in order "to meet the people"—at teas, picnics, meetings of professional associations, churches, annual conventions, and the like. Politicians devote incredible effort trying to figure out ways to be invited to see "the folks back home." The thought that 25, 100 or more people will be in attendance at an event is often sufficient to induce a candidate to rework a harried schedule—and even to endure yet another leathery chicken dinner. Further assured that the press, photographers and, best of all, television cameras will also be on hand, no earthly power can keep the politician away from your meeting!

Candidates recognize that "being heard" by the relative handful of voters who count is an exceptionally difficult undertaking in this era of media overload and message proliferation of every kind. Thus, the unabashed show of enthusiasm, even gratitude, which often meets even the most modest of invitations. Knowing that you, the inviter, are in the driver's seat and that you have something of substantial value to offer the candidate is critical. Your attitude ought *not* to be: "Mr. Congressman, I know I'm imposing, but is there any chance you might be able to find the time, someday, to talk with a few folks?" But *rather:* "Mr. Congressman, 75 of your constituents are eager to meet with you. When can we work out a convenient time on your schedule?" (To really "ice the cake" your request might add: "And several of the persons in our group wish to volunteer for work and fund-raising in your next campaign. Our organization also has a modest honorarium* to offer in appreciation of your efforts in coming to speak with us.")

The foregoing discussion by no means exhausts the possible ways to prepare in advance for a time of political need. Any campaign manager or candidate for office will volunteer a list of steps that are considered helpful to elected officials. Even the fact that you bothered to ask will not go unnoticed. . . .

* Attitudes toward honoraria in political life vary greatly. Some politicians never accept them; others won't budge without them. Some will refuse them when speaking in their own district or state and accept them when talking elsewhere. Some decline them in non-election years and solicit them during campaigns. And so on. When possible to offer a small sum, do so and let the politician have the option of refusal—and the attendant good feelings of magnanimity!

HOMEWORK PAYS OFF

"The mode through which the inevitable comes to pass is effort."

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

Most Americans wait for problems to emerge and then enter the political process tardily, reluctantly and without careful preparations. If you (and your colleagues) have stored up political credits in advance of making an actual request for help, you are clearly in a small minority.

But let us assume that the time has come for you to test the political waters. Where to begin? A bit of role-playing and a little introspection is first recommended in which you try to imagine where the legislator or other policymaker is likely to be "coming from." What are his most likely reactions to, in this case, "educators?" What is he likely to think when it is announced that "A Mrs. Jones from the Salem School District wishes to see you?"

While no single answer will correspond to all situations and to all personality types among politicians and legislators, twenty years of listening to such political figures convinces this writer that they are generally well disposed to education and poorly disposed to educators. Most policymakers are convinced that most educators simply don't understand the way the world is. In short, their initial mindset when educators come to see them is likely to be negative or at least guarded—unless you are one of that rare breed of educator who has shown understanding of the political process, appreciation of the essential role of the politician in confronting the dilemmas of a complex and contentious democratic society and, most important, that you are not "too proud to get your hands dirty" with the less glamorous aspects of political reality (as described above).

Here, then, are some of the stereotyped impressions of educators

held by "political types," impressions drawn from my recollections of what policymakers say about educators—usually in private.*

The Politician's View of Educators—In their Own Words

(1) Educators are arrogant and, worse yet, sanctimonious. They act as if they are the only ones who have high standards and any sincere commitment to decent public service. They act as if educators have all the answers and frequently treat us as petty creatures, not very bright, not very honest. Educators see themselves as responsible professionals but view us as political hacks.

(2) In order to frame effective social policy, we need facts, not generalities. We also need practical, not pie-in-the-sky, responses to immediate problems. Yet, rarely do educators have the information we need to make sound policy. Sometimes we suspect that they even withhold information we are entitled to.

(3) Educators ought to know how to communicate, but there are few groups that speak less clearly, less concisely, and with more obfuscation. Instead of precise, comprehensible, here-and-now language, what we get is usually too olympian, too utopian, too abstract, or too fuzzy to be helpful. The other side of this talking over our heads in jargon and verbiage is a tendency of many educators to talk down to us, as if we were some lower form of animal life. In either case, real understanding is seldom advanced by the way educators communicate with us.

(4) Educators have little understanding of the legitimacy and importance of the political process. This ignorance is expressed in many ways:

—Educators view our difficult work of negotiating, compromising, balancing interests, and refining or fine tuning public policies as dirty, underhanded, or even immoral. If we don't give educators everything they want, when they want it, they act as if incrementalism is evil, show little appreciation for the progress actually made, and damn us for letting the kids of America down.

—Educators also run counter to sound political practice by splitting, that is, by playing off their part of education (higher, elementary/secondary, libraries, school boards, state education agencies, teachers, etc.) against other education interests. Instead

* Adapted from my "Politicians and Educators: Two World Views," *Phi Delta Kappan*, November 1974, pp. 189-90. The original article contains the second part of the equation, namely, educators' stereotypes of politicians.

of a united educational front, we are faced with warring factions, a situation in which almost everyone loses.

—If politicians suggest that educators build coalitions with powerful non-educator groups, educators respond with righteous indignation that they are "above politics." The fact is that some of the most effective lobbyists for education are not educators but groups like organized labor, civil rights and church groups, and general citizens' associations, depending on the issue.

—Educators often play up to the executive branch bureaucrats and policymakers and even take sides against the legislatures. They seem oblivious to the fact that our various constitutions provide for co-equal branches of government with basic policy supposedly being forged in the legislative bodies.

(5) Educators only want more money. They seldom consider how to raise revenues nor do they recognize that we live in a tough world with many competing priorities.

(6) Educators give lip service to accountability but fail to do anything to bring it about. They are afraid to tell the tax-paying public what it gets for its huge investment in education. They agree with the need for accountability, but then they tell us they are professional people and that we don't have to worry about their acting in a responsible manner. They remind me of George Bernard Shaw's observation: "Every profession is a conspiracy against the laity."

(7) Educators blow with the wind; they are addicted to fads and quick cures. They seldom assert their responsibility to lead, but rather, cave in to popularized notions that usually lead to swift disillusionment.

(8) Educators refuse to admit that, just like other groups, they are promoting their own interests, economic and professional. Sometimes it is hard for politicians to know whether what educators propose is good for education or merely good for educators. They spend so much energy talking about "the profession." When was the last time you heard them talk about what was good for the kids?*

* A further "pet peeve" at the federal level: There is practically no continuity among the executive branch policymakers with whom we have to deal. Most of us on the Congressional committees concerned with education have been around a good while. In that time we have seen a new Commissioner (or Secretary) of Education every [illegible] months or less. Under such circumstances, it's hard to take them or their promises very seriously. (One of the Congress' most respected education staffers confides that he hasn't "even bothered to meet recent political appointees since I believe them of little consequence and likely to soon vanish from the scene.")

A START TOWARD BRIDGE BUILDING

As we have seen, the grievances and gulfs separating educators and politicians are many. While it is neither feasible nor desirable to work things out by enrolling all of these combatants in encounter groups and other forms of interpersonal therapy, a start can be made if sincere attention is given to these troublesome world views or mindsets. Reaching out with some understanding of how "the other side" might view the forthcoming meeting can't hurt. It might even help to forge a much-needed bridge over the troubled waters of contemporary educational policymaking.

After having put yourself in the policymakers' shoes, sensing how they might be predisposed toward you—and being careful not to provide reinforcement of any negative stereotyped impressions—additional homework is in order. Especially if you don't know your legislator personally, or if you are unfamiliar with his or her background and legislative district, you should consult the U.S. *Congressional Directory,* or its state equivalent if it exists. There you'll read the Member's biography and learn about his or her hometown,useful address(es) and telephone number(s), profession, educational background, stated issues of concern, membership in organizations, family members, length of service* in the legislature, key staff members, etc.—all potentially useful information in establishing rapport with the Member and helping you better to plan your approach.

Above all, you'll learn the Member's committee assignment and whether he/she is likely to have clout on substantive *authorization* committees—the ones defining specific programs

* It is important to realize that the Congress has recently experienced unusually high turnover in its membership. While most incumbents who stand for re-election are successful, many Members have retired voluntarily or unsuccessfully sought higher offices. The effect of this new development is that half the Congress has served five years or less. They do not have the extensive substantive backgrounds that were possessed, for example, by the architects of the major education and social programs of the Sixties and Seventies. Less wedded to traditional social welfare programs, they are simultaneously more affected by popular views like "The budget must be balanced!" or "Schools are doing a dreadful job!"

and entitlements; *appropriations* committees—those providing actual dollars for the authorized programs; or *budget* committees—the increasingly critical bodies which set overall funding levels (sometimes in considerable detail) for one type of government program vis-a-vis another, e.g. defense spending versus job training. Depending on the Member's assignment and your specific needs and interests, you may be able to work with him/her for a successful outcome or may need to cultivate other legislators who serve directly at "the right spots" in the committee structure.

THE PERSONAL—AND CONTINUING—TOUCH

"Apathy can only be overcome by enthusiasm and enthusiasm can only be aroused by two things: first, an ideal which takes the imagination by storm and, second, a definite, intelligible plan for carrying that ideal into practice."
—Arnold Toynbee

No matter how much biographical and statistical data you have consulted, real political mastery requires that you know the policymaker much more intimately. Hear the counsel of one veteran master of the political process:

> "Don't guess! *Know* your representative! Where is he on the issue(s) and why? Can he be talked to directly? Can he be persuaded? Who can persuade him? Whom does he listen to and why? Are those people willing to work with you? Are *you* willing to try to get them to work with you?"

Having considered your approach to your particular policymaker—and assuming you have determined to contact him/her directly rather than through intermediaries—there is still a range of choices. Contact at home, when he returns to the district? In Washington (or the state capital)? By correspondence? By telephone? Directly, or through senior staff? Which approach you use will depend on the nature of the issue you wish to put before him, on whether the issue is too technical for face-to-face conversation, on your own temperament in such matters, and whether your "homework" and advanced preparations have informed you as to which approach seems to work best with this particular Member.

Personal visits can be both individual or group in character. Group meetings—particularly when the visitors are persons of substantive consequence in their communities—tend to be difficult for a policymaker to pass up. (Bring along a photographer so the Member and your group can be featured in your organization's newsletter or, better yet, in the Member's official communications back to the district.) Groups also bring a variety of viewpoints and

expertise to the legislator's attention and enable members of the delegation to rest and recoup their thoughts while another holds forth. Individual contacts also carry great weight when that person is persuasive, articulate, authoritative in his field and, preferably, of some political consequence to the lawmaker.

In this last connection, educators need to know that they are rated by most politicians to be of great potential consequence. College presidents, especially land-grant and community college leaders, and teacher union heads, are considered particularly "close to the people." Legislators know that educated persons and their families vote and influence others to vote in far-above average proportion, and that the general public puts a high value on education as an highly desirable social good. This is no cause for arrogance; it is, rather, "getting in touch with one's own power."

Regardless of whether a group or individual visit is chosen it is important to:

(1) be flexible in the times you are available to see the Member, scheduling as far ahead as possible—and be prepared to suggest or to accept alternative appointments including meetings with a key staffer;

(2) be on time—and be prepared to wait for a tardy legislator;

(3) prepare your case and be clear about what substance or decisions you want to emerge from the meeting; don't hold important material back as this may be your only chance to educate the legislator;

(4) be brief and to the point (like Job, legislators complain that too many visitors "multiplieth words without knowledge"; they "ramble on," like the visiting educator who derailed the meeting by telling his representative: "Before beginning to speak, I'd like to say something. . ."

(5) if with a group, appoint a single, articulate and organized spokesman; agree on a common approach and avoid squabbling before the legislator;

(6) be informal and friendly, never bellicose and threatening;

(7) acknowledge the existence and arguments of opposing sides of a controversial issue. As a lobbyist or as a citizen petitioning your governors for "redress of grievance," you want help from an informed and effective legislator, one who knows what liabilities may result from his/her help. Unless policymakers know all the countervailing risks they may well come to resent you or the issue you seek help with, or both.

(8) before leaving, try to summarize the major points of your discussion and agree on follow-up actions, if any;

(9) use the occasion to give the Member something of value e.g. an invitation to address a large gathering, to write his/her views on the subject for publication in your organizational journal, an award of recognition, etc.;

(10) when you return home, follow up, preferably in writing. Reaffirm the areas of agreement reached and summarize any plans or commitments for the future.

Most especially, thank the lawmaker for his/her time and concern. Legislators, like all public officials, complain that they catch hell for almost everything and hardly ever hear a word of praise or thanks. So, search for friends in the legislative process and, when you find them, strengthen their hands with useful information and some much-needed expressions of appreciation.*

There are several types of personal contacts which have become standard tools in the lobbying arsenal. These might involve an annual celebration or commemoration such that, over time, every incumbent lawmaker feels constrained to appear regularly and to renew local contacts. School and campus visits are particularly popular (especially if a camera or TV is there to record the interaction of legislator with photogenic and ebullient children). In general, visits of policymakers to schools, job training programs, health care centers, and other real-life projects are likely to register greater gains than being "talked at," regardless of the congeniality of the setting. Policymakers like to see for themselves; that is what they tend to remember, not words alone.

Breakfast meetings during legislators' at-home visits are increasingly popular, for they enable the legislator to get an early start on a day filled with fence-mending and service to constituents. News releases of such events are generally highly desirable, but it is best to coordinate their contents, release, and accompanying photographs with the legislator's or official's own press aides. (Don't forget to use the story in your own organization's paper or newsletter and to inform local and neighborhood, as well as large-circulation, publications.)

One type of highly desirable, continuing relationship deserves

* Politicians armor themselves against the real (or imagined) assaults of their constituents, the media and their opponents by developing their own brand of self-deprecating humor. Examples: "I was burned in effigy. Not hung, but burned. My constituents like to make their point!" or: "My constituents worship the quicksand on which I walk." Even the most successful politicians identify with Caligula and, like him, "feel beleaguered and under-powered."

special attention: many legislators have achieved authentic expert status in their respective policy areas. Students of all ages, from high school to graduate school, could profit substantially from exposure in their classes to such authoritative policymakers on a regular basis (e.g. "practitioner-in-residence") or even on *ad hoc* occasions. Members would generally enjoy such opportunities, whether for personal growth, reflection, public exposure, etc. Some officials would highly prize an academic title (e.g. Adjunct or Visiting Professor). Benefits to the institution in the form of better-informed policymakers are certain to emerge, even as have a rich variety of academically valuable internships developed between the campus and the officials' offices and agencies. Yet, having pointed out a few of the advantages to all concerned, many if not most legislators report that they have never been invited to appear on the campuses of schools and colleges in their districts!

Informal contacts of a periodic nature should also be thoroughly explored and then nurtured. Some organizations routinely send notices of their meetings to their state and federal representatives and are pleasantly surprised at the number of times these Members "just happened to be in the neighborhood" and so come by "to shake a few hands and say a few words." For the politician, such opportunities are "pure gold"—a chance to see multiple constituents with the minimum expenditure of time. Gratitude for such informal opportunities is often expressed "down the road" when your organization has formal objectives to pursue.

Legislative briefings are one type of representational device being increasingly used to demonstrate widespread community support for your cause. To such a carefully planned meeting of your association or interest, invitations might be extended to educational administrators, representative parents and students, key figures in agriculture, labor, commerce and industry, the media and friends and staff aides of the legislator from your district. A well-planned, brief program which stresses the positive contributions your particular activity is making to the community at large is generally well-received by legislators who hear many "horror stories" and complaints each day, but only occasional good news and "success stories" from their constituents. (Again, follow-up and thank-you letters from attendees at such legislative briefings are a good investment.)

Organizational awards—and their attendant publicity—mean much to the average politician and executive officeholder. Often, they are the only "validation" for their work. But awards must be

well thought-through. Their citation should be neither frivolous nor cliche-ridden. Naturally, awards should not be granted so frequently as to debase their value. Often, a well-framed certificate, suitably inscribed, accomplishes your purpose while a gaudy or tasteless gold loving cup may evoke negative feelings. As in all such matters involving personal taste, prior consultation with the Member's staff, spouse or other confidant makes good sense. In any case, be assured that your award will be proudly displayed on the Member's office wall.

And don't forget to thank the Member's staff for their contributions. Like staffs everywhere, they think they do all the work while the boss gets all the credit. Members, after all, are spread thinly over many issues and many competing demands. Staff, on the other hand, are able to concentrate and follow up on individual projects, ideas and promises. They are the ones who develop the detailed specifications of legislation, organize committee hearings, draft questions for witnesses (and sometimes suggested responses as well), hammer out compromises with staff peers, prepare their Members to speak forcefully and persuasively, etc. Thus, it comes as no surprise that politically savvy associations often spend more time on the cultivation of staff than on Members. Staff are invited to visit educational institutions and programs, to speak to classes, to meet community leaders and in other ways to develop the substantive expertise and first-hand knowledge which will subsequently be reflected in the final legislative product. In short, staff are often crucial to making things happen. So remember them, too, in order to reap large dividends.

WORKING AT A DISTANCE

"God could not be everywhere, so he made mothers— and Western Union."

Letters and telegrams are no substitute for long-term, carefully nourished personal interaction. Yet, given the pressures of our era and the vast distances of our country, such communications can play a useful role in building and promoting your case.

In general, the correspondence that counts with policymakers is that which shows evidence of thought and conviction, rather than a mere outpouring of robot-typed form letters. Every politician knows that a constituent who takes the time to write an original letter probably cares deeply enough to act on those convictions at the polls. While lawmakers are under no automatic obligation to vote with their mail, most do care sincerely about what their constituents—and thoughtful people generally—think on the issues of the day. "Open letters" to the newspapers, particularly from "people who count" back home, seem to carry even greater weight, for the Member knows that they have been read by hundreds or thousands of other constituents.

There are no definitive rules for writing a good letter to a policymaker. But here are some edited and expanded suggestions made recently to the members of the American Vocational Association, one of Washington's most experienced interest groups:

(1) Letters should be clear, brief courteous, and factual. Simple English, not jargon, is essential. Most everything worth saying can be said in 1-2 pages.

(2) Be original: never use form letters or send carbon copies as originals.

(3) Introduce yourself. Tell briefly about yourself and your organization if you believe the Member is not already so informed.

(4) Write about a single subject in each letter. Don't get too cumbersome or technical.

(5) Refer to any legislative bill by number and name. Spell the sponsor's name correctly!

(6) Explain clearly why the proposed bill or appropriation is good or bad for your interest. Show *specifically* how the proposal will affect the Member's district. Be concrete, mentioning actual names of schools, particular communities, etc.

(7) Back up your arguments with facts and figures, but never exaggerate.

(8) Include newspaper and journal articles which are pertinent to the issue. Supportive editorials from local newspapers also carry weight.

(9) Ask for a reply regarding the Member's position on the issue.

(10) If that reply is noncommittal, write again, but avoid any intimidation, threats, or pressure.

(11) If he/she supports you, send a letter of appreciation and some further factual "ammunition" to help the cause along.

(12) When you or your colleagues have written some good letters or articles on the subject, ask the Member to insert them in the *Congressional Record* (or state legislative journals) so that others might share in the discussion. The act of having to write an introduction to your material in the *Record* often pushes the Member in to outright advocacy of your position!

(13) Keep writing and urge others to write, as informatively and as often as possible.

LET GEORGE—AND THE ASSOCIATION—DO IT!

"I pay my dues to the association and they hire those Washington lobbyists who are supposed to look out for my interests. Yet the association is always asking me *to get in direct touch with my Congressman for this or that emergency. I wonder what they're doing in Washington with my dues money anyway!"*

Variations of this complaint are often heard from the field, even as Washington association lobbyists complain about the naivete of their membership. Granted, political sophistication of the rank-and-file seems to be increasing. At least fewer educators seem to feel that political action is "dirty" or beneath their dignity. At least fewer local leaders seem to believe that sound public policies emerge merely because they are "right" on the merits.

At the same time, too few local educators are aware of both their own substantial potential power and the very real limitations of their paid professional representatives in the capital. For the truth is that as good as any association staff might be, they are merely "hired guns" in the eyes of the legislature or executive agencies. Insofar as they are knowledgeable about local needs and desires, and to those local interests, they are accorded access and the opportunity to state the association's case.

But few, if any, professional staff are as effective as well-informed and articulate constituents who build and maintain direct links with their policymakers. Association lobbyists know and strongly encourage these direct linkages, seek to have such respected local personalities testify at key hearings, and otherwise carry the association's case directly to policymakers, with or without accompanying staff participation. Perhaps most important, Washington association officials need to know that they can call on their network of politically astute and informed member contacts during critical moments in the political process and that the network will respond quickly, intelligently and, if need be, repeatedly.

Virtually all associations maintain such networks of local political activists, most often organized along congressional or other legislative district lines—one or more local activists for every elected representative. This network is kept informed by the staff of key developments on an all-year basis through special bulletins, briefings, legislative workshops, newsletters, telephone conference calls, mailed videocassettes, and the like. When key votes are to taken (or major decisions formulated by the executive branch), the association staff—unable to be everywhere at once—activates the network with specific assignments.

At the National Association of State University and Land-Grant Colleges, for example, five telephone calls start others making five pre-arranged calls each. Within two hours the entire network is mobilized. Network participants may be asked to telephone their representatives in order to get a current "head count"—how will the 435 members of the House of Representatives (or other body) vote on a particular bill or amendment? Alternatively, a good network can inform Washington of the specific substantive effects at the local level—on individual institutions and persons—of some grand and generalized idea hatched in the rarefied air of the capital. In as little as four hours, a useful response from the field begins to arrive at association headquarters. The hired guns find out whether their months of planning and hard work are paying off, where they are still vulnerable, where additional effort might prove rewarding, what kinds of compromise amendments are suggested by field responses, which of the network participants are "on the ball" with reliable and informed forecasts and, conversely, which are not carrying their fair share of network responsibility.

The point simply is that in a country (or many states) as large as ours, with legislatures having hundreds of members who are generally unbound by any form of party discipline or party-held policy, it is impossible for "George and the Association" to touch all the bases, to know and be everywhere. Only a politically astute membership, a sophisticated rank-and-file, can do that. Ultimately, power and influence are capacities you earn for yourself, not attributes that a paid staff alone can acquire for you.

TESTIMONY—ONLY THE 40-YARD LINE

"There are no great men, only great committees."
—Charles Addams

Many interest group objectives can be obtained short of actually appearing before a legislative body to testify on a given bill or appropriation. Sometimes, for example, what is sought is a favorable ruling on a disputed or unclear definition in law or regulation. Other times a recommendation for an executive branch appointment, a meeting with the President or another VIP, or a general commendation of the interest group's legitimacy are all that is desired. Usually, however, organizations turn to legislatures for new law authorizing certain activities, including the expenditure of public monies to attain particular objectives. When this is the case, effective testimony and sensitive day-to-day advocacy or lobbying for the bill are called for.

The purposes of a formal legislative hearing go substantially beyond the nominal or stated objective of obtaining information as to the necessity or desirability of the proposed law or appropriation of funds. Members are continuously probing to discern whether the bill is politically advantageous or detrimental to them. What are the political consequences of a vote for or against a given measure? Is this the kind of narrow issue that can safely be championed because it doesn't cost too much and because it won't anger important constituencies? While making its advocates happy, whom will it disturb? And is the bill merely "good for the country"—which may be enough to warrant support—or is there also political advantage to be secured?—which would make it even more attractive?

Frequently, parties at interest do not testify themselves but work behind-the-scenes to arrange witnesses of their choosing. Working with Members or key staff, they get favorable witnesses invited because they know that "big name" witnesses attract above-average attendance to the hearings of both legislators and the media.

In this context, it is best to get support from someone outside of

the field directly benefiting from the proposed legislation. A humanist seeking funding for the National Endowment on the Humanities generally doesn't have the credibility of a Nobel Laureate physicist who passionately argues the centrality of the arts and humanities in our national life. Thus, for years, Admiral Hyman Rickover, of nuclear submarine fame, was a regular staple at hearings of the congressional education committees. His crusty, anti-education establishment views always stimulated lively interest on the Members' parts, largely because they knew he was not appearing in order to feather his own nest. Similarly, mayors, governors, church, business and union leaders probably carry more weight in hearings than educators *per se.*

Because legislators are eager to learn who gets helped and who gets hurt, each piece of testimony should state at the outset who the witness is, who s/he represents, and what experience or expertise s/he has for making the claims which follow. A facilitating device in this regard is to arrange to be introduced to the committee conducting the hearings by your own representative and, if possible, to have the committee chairman or other key Member offer some words of praise about you, before your actual statement gets underway. With such "stage setting," the committee has been primed to hear your message in the most favorable light.

As in preparing for a personal or group meeting with a policymaker, there is homework that, ideally, should have been carefully planned and completed. Among other things, you should have:

(1) learned who the committee members and key staffers are, matching their photos to biographical sketches, pronouncing and spelling their names correctly, and ascertaining as much as possible about them that might be relevant to shaping the outcome you desire;

(2) prepared data—and, if possible, graphics—which convey the essence of your message. Information, the harder and more authoritative the better, is the currency of the public policy process. Members need at least a few facts to convince them of your case and to embolden them to carry your cause through the next stages of the legislative process. Without such armaments—which the legislator usually expects *you* to provide—few unprepared advocates may survive. In the words of former U.S. Senator William Hathaway, "Taking a bill to the floor of the Senate without adequate supporting information will make you nostalgic for the good old days of the Spanish Inquisition!";

(3) gathered human interest stories, anecdotes and other memorable examples which put your case in appealing human, not solely empirical, terms. Elected officials, in particular, *like to help people.* They wish to believe that the consequence of their actions is to improve the lot of the nation at large and their constituents in particular. They want to believe that there is a direct connection between the legislative process and human welfare. Your concrete examples for positive outcomes and "good news"—or of abject and appalling unmet needs— will help to move the hearings from abstraction to concrete action.

Washington observers like to tell of the committee hearing in 1978 on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965. After the usual parade of organization and institutional witnesses, the committee received testimony from a music student who had received a variety of federal student financial assistance. The student "testified" by playing Chopin brilliantly on a nearby piano. The committee was deeply moved, Member after Member remarking that, beyond all the data, here was a concrete example of how federal aid creates opportunities for talented persons to fulfill their human potential;

(4) forged alliances and coalitions with other groups that will support your legislative recommendations. In general, in the democratic political process, the larger and more unified the groups speaking with one voice, the more attention that will be paid to their demands;

(5) cultivated a "knight," a particular Member whom you have carefully briefed to carry the workload with his/her colleagues in committee and, later on the legislature's floor. This is a legislator who genuinely cares about the subject or who, in the process of winning victories for it, grows to enjoy his reputation and acclaim as a champion or sponsor of that given cause. He/she reads avidly in the field, is recognized by others, especially by his legislative colleagues, as an expert and, over time, becomes your chief advocate inside the legislature, one who can be expected to speak up for the cause without being pushed by you to do so.

This phenomenon of "conversion through doing" is remarked upon by all veteran lobbyists. When a legislator has been working with success on your behalf, far from feeling that you owe him something, he, having gained such positive external approbation and internal satisfaction from the work, generally becomes further linked with your work and goals which, in turn, generates even more support, initiatives and risk-taking in the future.

Some other pointers on the process of testimony* are even more straightforward but only slightly less important:

(1) Prepare a sufficient number of your statement (25-200, depending on the legislative forum) and deliver them to the committee the required number of days or hours in advance of your testimony (usually 24-72 hours). Many a key legislator or staffer becomes "out of sorts" when there is no copy of your testimony available in time to read it and to prepare questions in advance.

(2) Provide an executive summary or crisp overview of your formal statement. This can serve as a cover page for your key points, the most newsworthy findings, the kinds of dramatic and quotable phrases that you hope the media and your advocates will pick up and use. (Former HEW Secretary Joseph Califano was a master at having his testimony repeated on TV in lead news stories. Cigarette smoking, said he, is "Creeping Cancer"—a line too good for the media to ignore.)

(3) Speak as extemporaneously as possible, summarizing your views without digressions or mumbling. If you *must* read from the prepared text, ten minutes (some staffers say 20) is the absolute maximum advisable. What the legislators cover in the question-and-answer period is what they remember far better than your formal statement. The best testimony is articulate, informative, engaging and authoritative (without being pompous). Remember always that the purpose of your testimony is not to tell the committee how much you know, but rather to win adherents to your point of view.

(4) Be aware of what has been said by previous witnesses and don't repeat stale points—unless you know that a certain point worked well before and wish to reinforce that favorable impact in the committee's collective mind.

(5) Emphasize the constructive, especially how your proposal will help "children and little people," not just your professional guild or relatively privileged colleagues.

(6) Attend the hearings before and after your own statement. Your presence demonstrates your (and your association's) concerns, gives added credibility to the process and reinforces your sponsor's (knight's) belief that the bill warrants favorable action as

* Adapted and liberally edited from legislative guidebooks of American School Counselor Association, American Personnel and Guidance Association, American Vocational Association. See bibliography which follows.

soon as possible because it enjoys active support as well as being sound on the merits.

(7) Be both positive and unambiguous. (Don't send unclear messages in the form of the proverbial "Jewish telegram:" "Start worrying! Letter follows.") Avoid threats or predictions of dire political consequences if your proposal doesn't pass. And, as always, thank the legislators for their concern for your cause and for their favorable consideration of your proposal.

(8) Express your convictions and don't be afraid of your expertise. While trying to win friends for your cause, stand firm—politely and with well-stated evidence—for the essentials you believe to be true. (Not like the teacher interviewing for a scarce position who, when asked whether the Mississippi River flowed north or south, replied that he could teach it either way.)

31-B

ADVANCING TOWARD THE GOAL LINE

"To succeed, planning alone is insufficient. One must improvise as well."

—Isaac Asimov

Space does not permit a comprehensive discussion of the many steps in the legislative process which follow the completion of formal testimony. Fortunately, a number of excellent guides may be consulted for the detailed descriptions of the rules and procedures which govern further legislative consideration. It is essential, as in any game of skill, that you learn these rules and procedures—preferably before you violate them unwittingly.

For the Washington political scene and Congressional politics, in particular, the following are recommended. (A few classic national and state studies are included.)

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U.S. Congress. *Congressional Pictorial Directory.* Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office (published each Congress).

U.S. Congress. *Official Congressional Directory.* Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office (published annually).

U.S. General Services Administration. *Government Manual,* (updated yearly).

Also highly recommended: a 16 mm film, *The Politicians,* follows the policymaking process from the committees of Congress to the White House. For rental information, contact Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 3401 Market Street, Suite 252, Philadelphia, PA 19104. Also, see the color sound filmstrip, *The Federal Legislative Process: How a Bill Becomes a Law;* Atlantic Educational Productions, 1532 East Capital Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.

SUMMING UP

"Until you've [illegible] in politics you've never really been alive. It's the only sport for grownups—all other games are for kids."

—cited by Alan Rosenthal

Practitioners of the legislative process often come to love it and even, in time, to respect it! When that moment arrives, many of these "political junkies" and fire-tested veterans wish to share their lore and learning with others newly embarked on a legislative adventure.

In the spirit of sharing, as well as of summing up this mini-manual, I offer these "golden rules" for successful representation with public officials of all types.*

(1) Be fair toward public officials. With very rare exceptions, they are honest, intelligent, and want to do the right things. Your job is to inform them effectively about what you think is right.

(2) Avoid cynicism. Government and politics may be faulty, but so is every profession. A disdainful attitude is an expensive luxury these days for it "poisons the well" and immobilizes the will to work for social betterment. ("Those who live on an island should not make an enemy of the sea." Or try a Sam Rayburn maxim: "Never spit chewing tabacco on the cake you hope to eat yourself.") In short, the political process we too often disparage is still our best hope for effecting constructive social change.

(3) Be understanding. Put yourself in the public official's place. Try to understand his/her problems, outlook, and aims. Then you are more likely to persuade him/her to do the same in understanding yours.

(4) Be friendly. Don't contact public officials only when you want their help. Take pains to keep in touch with them throughout the year, every year. (Lyndon Johnson again: "You have the kind

* This listing is a much embellished version of one handed down the generations from activist to activist and appearing, for example, in the American Vocational Association's 1979 "Legislative Kit."

of friends *you are.* Get to be part of your legislator's future!")

(5) Be reasonable. Recognize that there are legitimate differences of opinion. Never indulge in threats or recriminations; they are confessions of weakness. Keep working to change the other fellow's mind.

(6) Be thoughtful. Commend the right things public officials do: that's the way you like to be treated. Remember that public officials, in particular, need your "strokes" of recognition, publicity, visibility, validation.

(7)Be charitable—up to a point. The failure of public officials to do what you wanted may be your responsibility if you have not done a good job in preparing, presenting, and following through on your case. In any event, if you can't change their minds you can always fall back on a time-hallowed rule of thumb for American politics: "Don't get mad—get even." Every public official knows that you will have a chance to do just that on the next election day.

(8) Be constructive. You don't like to be scolded, pestered, or preached to. Neither do public officials. Present an alternative, a new way of looking at the problem, a new formula, and not merely negative carping.

(9) Be cooperative. If a public official makes a reasonable request, try to comply with it. Don't back away for fear that it's a "deal" or that you're "getting into politics."

(10) Be realistic and persistent. Remember that controversial legislation and regulation usually result in a compromise not wholly satisfactory to any one contending party. This is the principle of "Rough or Approximate Justice"; it has always been and will always be so in a democracy. Progress, although incremental, is no less real—and it may even be more enduring for its evolutionary development that builds wider support.

(11) Be practical. Recognize that each lawmaker has commitments and that a certain amount of vote-trading goes on in all legislatures. Don't chastise lawmakers who normally support you if they vote against one of your bills. This doesn't necessarily mean that they have deserted your whole program. Give them the benefit of the doubt; the lawmaker will appreciate it and remember that you did. And remember that while some votes may be firmly committed, there will be many others—on both sides of the partisan aisle—that can be swayed on the basis of sound arguments, properly presented and well documented.

(12) Be a good opponent. Fight issues, not personalities. And again, be ready with alternative solutions to problems and

shortcomings, as well as with criticism. This is fair and constructive opposition.

(13) Be informed. Do your homework. Never meet with public officials or candidates to advocate a position without first studying the facts and the arguments, pro and con, as well as the context of rules and politics in which the decision will be made. The mere fact that you want a public official to adopt your position won't be enough.

(14) Be trustworthy. When promises are made, keep them. This is a cardinal rule of politics. If you tell a public official you'll do something, stick to your end of the bargain.

(15) Be loyal. Avoid surprising your friends with unannounced strategems. Don't change horses in the middle of the stream. Never leave officials out on a limb by changing your position after they have publicly taken the position that you have urged upon them.

(16) Evaluate and weigh the issues; don't panic at each engagement. For example, many bills are tossed into the legislative hopper "by request" and are never intended to become law. So don't criticize lawmakers for every bill which is introduced, and don't sound the panic alarm until you're sure a bill or legislative action is "for real."

(17) Be discreet. Participation in discussions about lawmakers being "bought"or "paid off" is worse than useless. You have absolutely nothing to gain and everything to lose by such speculations. Furthermore, chances are extremely high that it isn't true.

(18) Be generous. Remember that in success everyone can claim credit. As Senator Wayne Morse used to remind his colleagues in the years when federal education legislation was exceedingly difficult to enact: "Victory has a thousand fathers; defeat is an orphan." Therefore, thank policymakers for their positive acts at least as often as you inquire why they went wrong. Let them know you are watching their record closely and are at least as ready to reward and praise as you are to punish and condemn.

(19) Be visionary. Especially when it comes to the political process, there is seldom an absolute and final defeat. A loss with one Member may lead to finding a better champion elsewhere. Failure in committee may be overturned on the legislative floor. Debate in one chamber may often be reversed in the other. Victory

may be snatched from the jaws of defeat in a conference committee. . . and so on.

(20) Work—and be persistent. In the immortal words of Charlie Chan: "Everything cometh to he who waiteth, as long as he who waiteth worketh like hell in the meantime!"

On this final point alone, volumes could be written, adorned by lively case studies. For, of all the political assets, stamina and persistence are surely the most underrated, least dispensable ingredients of success. Legislators may shrug off one visit or one letter or a single constituent, but few will ignore (except at their peril) informed, omnipresent and insistent demands. Members receiving 25-50 communications over a period of time have been known to exclaim: "They're really on my back on this one! I've got to move."

The problem is that most participants in the political process merely dabble. Having written a letter, made one visit or a single telephone call they feel they've done their job: "Let the Association carry on for me!" Yet, success is usually long in coming, many a bill taking two (or more) years to enactment. There are simply no known shortcuts to checking in with Members and their staff and staying in continuous touch with one's association and cooperating allies.

IN CONCLUSION—AND AT THE BEGINNING

Victory in legislation and public policy—like success in other walks of life—has its roots in sound organization, thoughtful planning, unceasing cooperation, imaginative liaison, constant surveillance, and just plain hard work. While there are no guarantees of success—certainly none that could flow from slavish adherence to any manual such as this—satisfaction should come more often to those who care enough to practice the straightforward prescriptions recommended in these pages.

It is time to close this mini-manual and to encourage its readers to go out and become "experiential." The ultimate truth of the foregoing propositions does not rest on the author's assertions but, rather, on the reader's ability to make this counsel work in actual practice. I invite you to try.

"If you experience it, it's the truth. The same thing merely believed is a lie."

—Werner Erhard

"Faith and *action—the future is ours."*

—Brigham Young

"It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope."

—Robert F. Kennedy

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